

London pro-Gaza workers block Foreign Office to demand Israel arms embargo



London, July 24 (RHC)-- Protesters in Britain have obstructed the entrances to the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) headquarters in London, expressing their anger with lack of action on the part of the new Labour government in altering UK policy regarding Israel's genocide in Gaza.

Some 300 demonstrators outside the government office on Wednesday waved the Palestinian flag, while holding placards and banners that read "Genocide Made in Britain" and calling on the British government to ban arms exports to the occupying Tel Aviv regime. At least nine activists were arrested after clashes erupted between law-enforcement and the protesters.

The Workers for a Free Palestine, which coordinated the demonstration, stated that their objective was to hold the foreign secretary, David Lammy, accountable for his previous statements and ensure that he follows through on his own calls for transparency by releasing legal guidance on UK arms sales to Israel.

A protester from the organization said that if the advice "confirms Israel has breached international law as the shadow foreign minister, Alicia Kearns, says it does – the government should immediately halt arms exports to Israel."

In March, the FCDO faced allegations from former Foreign Affairs Committee Chair Alicia Kearns regarding the concealment of legal advice indicating that Israel is in breach of international humanitarian law in Gaza.

Meanwhile, Lammy is facing criticism for his inaction regarding the ongoing licensing of UK arms exports to Israel, and for not providing clarity on whether the UK would detain Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu if he visited Britain following an arrest warrant by the International Criminal Court (ICC).

While protests against the killing of civilians in Gaza continue in the UK, the state has responded with police brutality and legal threats so as to stifle any dissent.

ICC Prosecutor Karim Khan formally asked for the issuance of arrest warrants for Netanyahu and minister of military affairs Yoav Gallant on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity in the Gaza Strip.

Labour has up to this point only changed one aspect of their policy towards Gaza by declaring that the UK will reinstate funding to the UN relief agency for Palestinians UNRWA.

"It is clear after a fortnight that the government could have acted by now, but is instead prevaricating as hundreds of Palestinians in Gaza die. Labour talks about due process, but the people of Gaza cannot wait. Palestinians are demanding answers now," a person at the demonstration said.

The Workers for a Free Palestine has coordinated additional blockades, where thousands of workers and trade unionists have closed down arms factories throughout the UK.

On May Day, the organization orchestrated a demonstration at the Department of Business and Trade, effectively blocking all entrances to the building. As a result, the building was closed and employees were advised not to report to the office on that day.

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